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## A 'Sincere' Act, Quebec Killer Says of '70 Deed

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MONTREAL—One of four secessionist extremists imprisoned 12 years ago for murdering a Quebec Cabinet minister has termed the decision to strangle the official "a sincere gesture to show that what we were saying was not just words."

Francis Simard made this statement at a news conference here accompanying the publication of his book on the killing, "To Be Finished With October." He was released on parole last March; the three others have also been paroled.

Mr. Simard said he had written his account of the murder, which occurred

in October 1970, "to shut the mouths of those who write without knowing anything, without having lived with the events in their guts."

The book, for which Mr. Simard stands to receive up to \$8,000 in royalties, describes how the four members of a guerrilla cell within the left-wing secessionist Front for the Liberation of Quebec kidnapped Pierre Laporte, the 49-year old Minister of Labor, and killed him a week later.

After Mr. Laporte had been strangled, Mr. Simard said, he and the three other terrorists, then all in their early 20's, nearly collapsed in guilt.

"At first we almost had nothing to say about what had happened," he recalled. "And then suddenly we became terribly sick. It's as if we realized suddenly with a sickening feeling the seriousness of our actions. You realize how precious a life is, and then it's too late."

"I remember saying: 'What have we done! It can't be!'"

However, Mr. Simard dismissed any suggestion that the killing was an accident or somehow unpremeditated.

He said the men had not intended to kill Mr. Laporte when they kidnapped him. But, he said, as the Government spurned overtures for negotiations, it was decided to kill the minister to show that they were acting out of "convic-

tion."

Asked several times by French-speaking reporters which of the four had actually strangled Mr. Laporte, Mr. Simard replied with some heat that it was a collective decision and a collective act in which all four shared. His accomplices, Bernard Lortie and the brothers Jacques and Paul Rose, collaborated in writing the book, he said.

### Tragic and Dramatic

Mr. Simard said that Mr. Laporte's death was "tragic and dramatic as all deaths are tragic and dramatic." He said he felt bad about it but added that he also felt bad about the deaths of convicts he came to know during his imprisonment.

He insisted that Mr. Laporte had not been tortured, and he scorned suggestions in some previously published ac-

counts and memoirs that the Front for the Liberation of Quebec had been manipulated by foreign intelligence agencies to provoke violence that would discredit the separatist position.

He said agents of such organizations as the Central Intelligence Agency or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had had nothing to do with the case. "There were only five of us in that room," he said, "the four F.L.Q. members and Laporte."

At the news conference, during which several reporters asked him to autograph copies of his book for them, Mr. Simard also made it clear that he still believed both that Quebec should be independent and that capitalism must be replaced.

Noting that in 1970 the cry for independence was in the streets, he said,

"Today it appears to have been bureaucratized, lying in the dossiers of functionaries, and those who have caused this are very wrong."

He clearly meant the Parti Québécois, which rules the province and which says its aim is separation from the Canadian federation.